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E.O. 12065: N/A
TAGS: PEPR, PINS, SOPN, LY, UK
SUBJ: BRITISH PRESS ALLEGES LIBYAN HIT SQUADS OPERATING IN UK
REF: LONDON 4281

1. ON MARCH 5 THE DAILY TELEGRAPH PUBLISHED THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE CLAIMING THAT LIBYAN HIT SQUADS HAVE ARRIVED IN LONDON TO WORK AGAINST OPPONENTS OF THE QADHAFI REGIME. ARTICLE WAS ENTITLED, "QADHAFI'S DEATH SQUADS BACK WITH

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FRESH 'HIT LIST'."

2. QUOTE NEW LIBYAN DEATH SQUADS ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE ARRIVED IN LONDON WITH A LIST OF VICTIMS TO INTIMIDATE OR KILL. TARGETS ARE THOUGHT TO INCLUDE LIBYAN STUDENTS AND ACADEMICS ASSOCIATED WITH FOREIGN-BASED OPPOSITION TO COL. QADHAFI'S REGIME.

MOST OF THEM ARRIVED LAST MONTH, AND THEY ARE THOUGHT TO HAVE FALSE PAPERS INDICATING THAT THEY ARE STUDENTS. ABOUT 3,000 LIBYANS ARE STUDYING AT BRITISH COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES. SOME HELP PRODUCE UNDERGROUND ANTI-QADHAFI NEWS SHEETS AND THEY ARE WELL FINANCED AND FLOURISHING. CAMPUS TENSIONS BETWEEN PRO AND ANTI-QADHAFI FACTIONS HAVE ALREADY SURFACED. THE TRIPOLI REGIME IS KNOWN TO TAKE A CLOSE INTEREST IN ITS OVERSEAS STUDENTS AND THEIR

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ACTIVITIES THROUGH LOCAL EMBASSIES.
OPPONENTS OF QADHAFI HAVE NOTED A SUDDEN INFLUX OF NEW FACES. ONE HAS BEEN RECOGNIZED AS A FORMER OFFICIAL OF THE LIBYAN EMBASSY IN ST. JAMES'S SQUARE.
WHEN THE EMBASSY WAS TAKEN OVER BY PRO-QADHAFI ELEMENTS AS PEOPLE'S BUREAU HE RETURNED TO TRIPOLI, BUT HE IS NOW BACK IN LONDON ARMED WITH WHAT APPEAR TO BE CREDENTIALS AS A PH.D STUDENT AT A BRITISH UNIVERSITY.
HE IS WIDELY REGARDED AS VIRTUALLY ILLITERATE. THE UNIVERSITY HAS NEVER HEARD OF HIM.
HE HAS MADE CONTACT WITH ONE LONDON-BASED ARAB SCHOLAR AND ATTEMPTED A SECOND MEETING IN SUSPICIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES,

BUT THE SCHOLAR DECIDED THIS WAS TOO DANGEROUS AND STAYED AWAY. HE SAID LATER: "I DO NOT KNOW FOR SURE THAT THEY ARE AFTER ME BUT I AM BEING VERY CAREFUL."
CALLS TO RETURN HOME.
LESS THAN A YEAR AGO LIBYAN DEATH SQUADS SHOT TWO OPPOSITION FIGURES IN LONDON DURING A SPATE OF SIMILAR KILLINGS IN EUROPEAN CAPITALS AND FOLLOWING A WARNING BY QADHAFI THAT OVERSEAS LIBYANS WOULD BE "LIQUIDATED" UNLESS THEY RETURNED HOME.
NOT ALL THE VICTIMS WERE POLITICALLY ACTIVE. THE GUNMEN WERE YOUNG ZEALOTS DRIVEN BY BLIND FAITH RATHER THAN EXPERTISE IN SELECTING AND DESPATCHING THEIR TARGETS.
INTERNATIONAL REACTION FORCED QADHAFI TO RESCIND HIS POLICY, BUT IN RECENT MONTHS THREE HIGHLY PLACED ENVOYS FROM TRIPOLI HAVE VISITED SAUDI ARABIA, PARIS, WEST GERMANY, ITALY AND LONDON INVITING FOREIGN-BASED LIBYAN DISSIDENTS TO RETURN HOME.
LAST WEEK A LIBYAN GUNMAN WAS ARRESTED AT ROME AIRPORT AFTER FIRING ON PASSENGERS. HE NAMED A LIBYAN "ENEMY OF QADHAFI" AS HIS TARGET.
MEANWHILE THE SPATE OF ANTI-QADHAFI PUBLICATIONS CIRCULATING IN EUROPEAN CAPITALS CONTINUES, DESPITE FIRE ATTACKS ON NEWS STANDS IN LONDON AND THREATS TO PUBLISHERS.
ONE DOCUMENT NOW CIRCULATING IS A COPY OF A LETTER WRITTEN BY MR. AHMED IBRAHIM EHWAS, LIBYA'S FORMER

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CHARGE D'AFFAIRES AT THE GUYANA EMBASSY. IT EXPLAINED HOW, AS A MILITARY INSTRUCTOR IN THE LIBYAN ARMY UNDER KING IDRIS, HE HAD TAUGHT QADHAFI, BUT NOW COULD HAVE NO TRUCK WITH HIS GOVERNMENT.
THIS DEFECTION IS ONLY THE LATEST IN A STEADY STREAM WHICH INCLUDES THE LIBYAN AMBASSADOR TO INDIA AND COL. QADHAFI'S UNITED NATIONS AMBASSADOR.
SCATTERED OPPOSITION.
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THE OPPOSITION IS NOT A STRUCTURED BODY AND IS SCATTERED BETWEEN THE MIDDLE EAST, EUROPE AND THE UNITED STATES. THE LEADERS ARE RELUCTANT TO EMERGE AND BE IDENTIFIED. THEIR AIM IS TO ACHIEVE THE DELICATE TASK OF OUSTING QADHAFI BY ASSASSINATION IF NECESSARY, WITHOUT ALLOWING THE ARMY INTO POWER.
LONDON'S NEW LIBYANS MAY BE MERELY GATHERING INFORMATION, BUT OFFICIAL NEWSPAPERS HAVE RECENTLY HINTED AT A NEW CRACKDOWN.
COL. QADHAFI HAS SHOWN INCREASING SENSITIVITY TO CENTRES OF RESISTANCE. STUDENTS WITHIN LIBYA HAVE MADE ATTEMPTS ON HIS LIFE AND HE HAS NOW ABANDONED PERSONAL LECTURES, ONLY SPEAKING FROM A TELEVISION STUDIO. ENT QUOTE.
3. THE TIMES PROVIDED A FOLLOW-UP MARCH 6 UNDER THE TITLE "LIBYANS FEAR 'HIT TEAMS' IN BRITAIN."

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4. QUOTE LIBYAN EXILES IN BRITAIN FEAR THEY COULD BE THE TARGET FOR FRESH ATTACKS BY SUPPORTERS OF COLONEL QADHAFI. ONE SOURCE IN THE LIBYAN COMMUNITY SAID YESTERDAY THAT BETWEEN FOUR AND SIX POTENTIAL ASSASSINS ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE ARRIVED IN BRITAIN.
SPECIAL BRANCH OFFICERS AT SCOTLAND YARD REFUSED TO COMMENT ON THE CLAIMS OF A LIBYAN ASSASSINATION TEAM BUT THE EXILES BELIEVE THAT COLONEL QADHAFI HAS INITIATED FRESH ATTACKS ON THEIR NUMBERS.
THIS WEEK THE LIBYAN LEADER MARKED THE FOURTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDATION OF THE "PEOPLE'S CONGRESSES" IN HIS COUNTRY BY DECLARING THAT "THE MASSES HAD THE RIGHT TO

LIQUIDATE THEIR ENEMIES AT HOME AND ABROAD." LIBYAN REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEES WERE ALSO REPORTED TO HAVE RE-AFFIRMED THE NEED.
A YEAR AGO LIBYAN ASSASSINS STRUCK TWICE IN LONDON WITHIN A FEW WEEKS AND KILLED A JOURNALIST AND A LAWYER. THREE MEN WERE CONVICTED LATER AT THE CENTRAL CRIMINAL COURT BUT ANOTHER THREE ESCAPED POLICE DETECTION.
THE SIX HAD TRAVELLED FROM LIBYA AND LIVED IN LONDON FOR SOME WEEKS. THE MEN CAPTURED BY THE POLICE WERE WELL TRAINED, TOUGH PROFESSIONALS.
A FEW MONTHS AFTER THE ATTACKS MR. MUSA KUSA, LIBYA'S CHIEF REPRESENTATIVE IN BRITAIN, WAS EXPELLED AFTER RE-PEATING TO THE TIMES DEATH THREATS AGAINST EXILES.
THE ASSASSINATION ATTACKS PETERED OUT BOTH IN BRITAIN AND OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES BUT LAST WEEK A LIBYAN GUN-MAN TRIED TO ATTACK AN AIPLINE PASSENGER IN ROME.
THE EXILES IN LONDON, ACCORDING TO THE SOURCE YESTERDAY, BELIEVED THAT THEIR OPPONENTS ARE STILL TRYING TO SILENCE A GROUP OF PEOPLE SAID TO NUMBER UP TO 12. ONE OF THAT GROUP IS SAID TO HAVE NARROWLY ESCAPED ATTACK RECENTLY WHEN A FRIEND CHECKED AN APPARENTLY INNOCENT MEETING AND DISCOVERED NOT ONE BUT TWO MEN WAITING FOR HIM. END QUOTE.
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